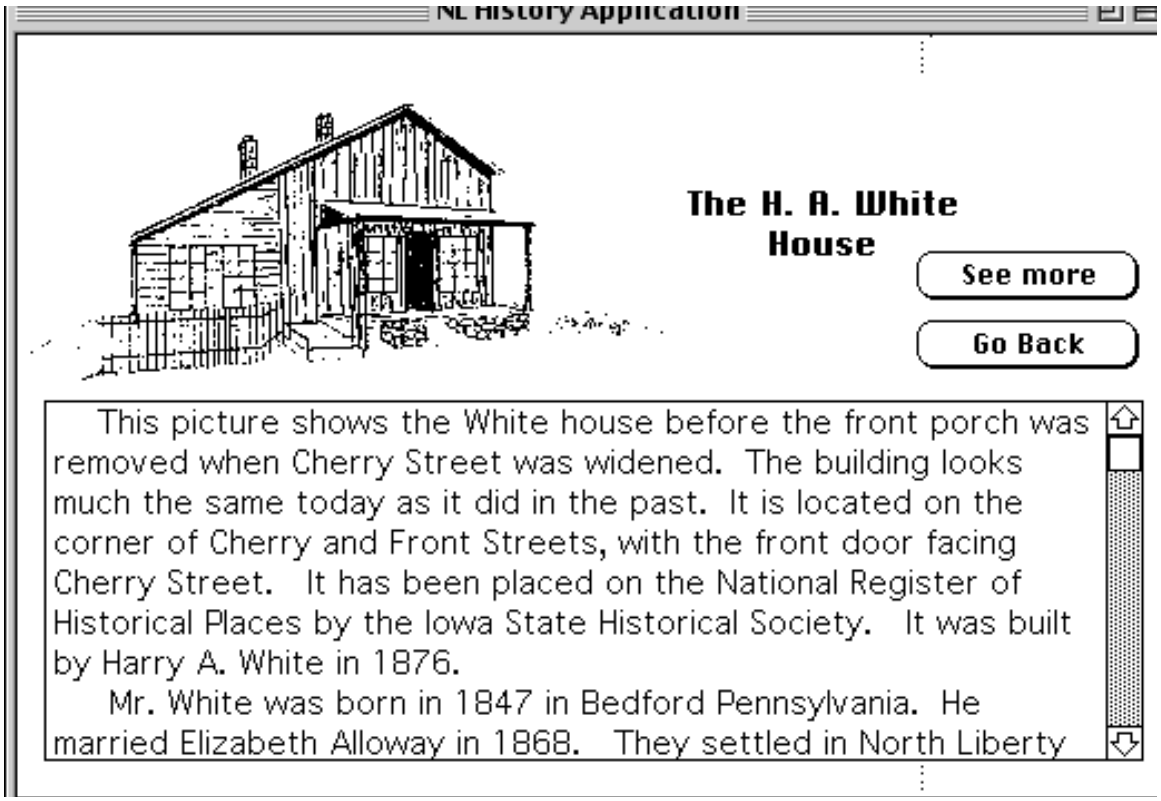
NL History Application
The H. A. White House
See more
Go Back
This picture shows the White house before the front porch was removed when Cherry Street was widened. The building looks much the same today as it did in the past. It is located on the corner of Cherry and Front Streets, with the front door facing Cherry Street. It has been placed on the National Register of Historical Places by the Iowa State Historical Society. It was built by Harry A. White in 1876.
Mr. White was born in 1847 in Bedford Pennsylvania. He married Elizabeth Alloway in 1868. They settled in North Liberty

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Mr. White was born in 1847 in Bedford Pennsylvania. He married Elizabeth Alloway in 1868. They settled in North Liberty in 1875. The White's had one daughter, Jessie, who married Dale Anderson.

Harry White was a jack-of-all-trades. He was a carpenter, meat cutter, shoe maker, store keeper, postmaster, and more. He ran a grocery store in his house. In addition to letting customers come to the store, he also had a "huckster wagon" which was like a rolling grocery store that drove around the countryside to those who lived some distance away. The wagon, which was pulled by horses, went as far as Tiffin and Oxford. At least one of the drivers was A.S. Bane who sold cream, eggs, flour, sugar and pans to country folks. (A.S. was known to most people as Bert and one of Bert's uncles was Dr. Stewart).

In 1877 Mr. White became Postmaster. In 1882 he became a Notary Public. His wife Elizabeth had a "laying out" board, and helped prepare bodies for burial. Just before the funeral, the hearse would come from Iowa City and pick up the body and take it to the church or the graveyard.

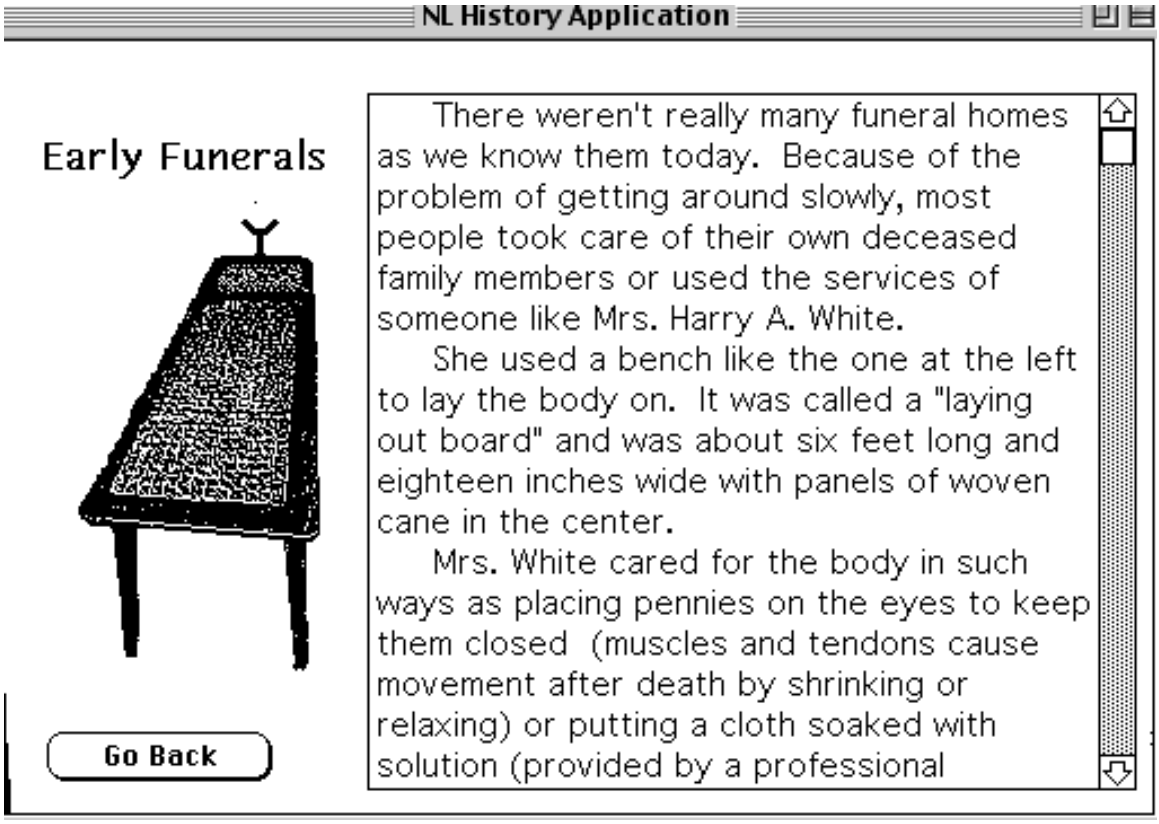
One corner of the house was also the office and home of Dr. James Von Stein.

The first telephone was in the White house, and they also had the first gramophone.

You can see how important a "General Store" was for the community, and the White's provided many useful services for the people. Without our convenient ways of spreading news, many people went to the store just to hear the lastest news and visit with their friends and neighbors.

The house was lived in by the family for many years (Jessie Anderson, and her daughter Delma Dever both lived there) but later was used by local businesses as an office. Lawyer Phil MacTaggart had his office there before moving to the old bank building. The old store is now used as the offices of McCoy Construction.

If you would like to read more about the White family, see Irving Weber's Iowa City vol. 5, pages 13-16.


NL History Application
Early Funerals
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There weren't really many funeral homes as we know them today. Because of the problem of getting around slowly, most people took care of their own deceased family members or used the services of someone like Mrs. Harry A. White.
She used a bench like the one at the left to lay the body on. It was called a "laying out board" and was about six feet long and eighteen inches wide with panels of woven cane in the center.
Mrs. White cared for the body in such ways as placing pennies on the eyes to keep them closed (muscles and tendons cause movement after death by shrinking or relaxing) or putting a cloth soaked with solution (provided by a professional

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Just before the funeral service, the undertaker would arrive and transfer the body to the casket. (Irving Weber's Iowa City vol.5)

Some families would "lay the body out" at their own homes. Sometimes they would have a room which was used for special needs like the birth of a child, or for someone sick or dead. Perhaps it was so the "often unpleasant memories" wouldn't be associated with the rooms they lived in each day. If you are interested in rooms like this, read The Borning Room by Fleishman.

Many early settlers were buried in home made wooden boxes, and were not "preserved" by embalming as we do today.

Some families had their own small cemeteries, such as the Alt cemetery. Other people used cemeteries which were privately "operated" like the Wray cemetery. It is likely that some early burials were made in places which are not known or marked today.